NFFTIO S&T ADVISOR TRAINING

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

NFFTIO NRSA TRAINING
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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- **One person’s opinion**
- **Pick what works for you**
- **Basic rule: be comfortable inside**

CREDIBILITY

- **Foundation-level advice:**
  - **Credibility is key**
    - **some things build it**
      - **and gradually increase it over time**
    - **some things destroy it**
      - **can happen instantly, e.g.,**
        - **talking too much,**
        - **listening too little**

BUILDING CREDIBILITY

- **Personal Traits**
- **Professional Traits**
- **Briefing Situations**

BRIEFING CREDIBILITY

- **Preparation is essential**
  - **Organized, factual, logical, complete**
  - **Set the stage**
  - **Situation under your control**
- **Remember: time, time, time**
  - **Be on time**
  - **Don’t run over your time**
  - **Ensure critical info presented first**
  - **Allow time for discussion/decision**

BRIEFING PREPARATION

- **Why, Who, What, When, Where, & How**
  - **Ask yourself these questions first**
- **Think about the people involved**
  - **Think about the facts, too**
- **Practice <u>Listening</u>**

- ***Remember:***
  Communication is 100% people!

BRIEFING PREPARATION: WHY?

- **Basic questions:**
  - **Is the brief essential?**
  - **Is another communication form better?**
  - **“Why” = the result you want**

BRIEFING PREPARATION: WHO?

- **Inclusion is key**
- **<u>Must</u> include any and all influencers and decision-makers**
- **<u>Should</u> include others who have expressed strong opinions**
- **Desire common understanding**

BRIEFING PREPARATION: WHAT?

- **Focus the brief**
- **Decide key needs up front**
- **Limit brief to key needs**

BRIEFING PREPARATION: WHAT?
(cont)

- ***Brief should be brief***
- **State desired results up front**
- **State pertinent facts**
- **Identify assumptions**
- **Develop logic leading to recommendations**
- **Ask for what you want**

BRIEFING PREPARATION: WHEN?

- **Timing is important**
- **Decision brief: must have time to act**
- **Information brief: should have no surprises**
- **Political brief: whenever the boss says so**

BRIEFING PREPARATION: WHERE?

- **Location: convenient & pleasurable**
  - **Close by; sized to fit group**
  - **Not too hot or cold**
  - **Adequate lighting**
  - **Tables, chairs… as appropriate**
  - **Correct audiovisual aids**
  - **Suited to formality level**
  - **Amenities as desired/appropriate**

BRIEFING PREPARATION: HOW?

- **Formal or informal?**
- **Tailor to fit situation:**
  - **Time, place, setting, brief itself**
- **Match communication technique to primary decision-maker**
  - ***but*, satisfy communication needs of the larger audience**

BRIEFING PREPARATION: HOW? (cont)

- **People process input differently**
  - **Visual, auditory, feelings, subtleties**
- **Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP):**
  - **Match delivery to other's perceptual language**
- **One-on-one: match other's style**
- **Group: match key decision-maker's style**
  - ***but*, cover all the bases**

NLP -- VISUAL PEOPLE

- **Like pictures**
  - **Focus on concepts & context**
  - **Want to know relationship of your information to some larger picture**
- **Use words like:**
  - **I <u>see</u> what you're saying, <u>looks</u> to me like …**
- **Eye movement is:**
  - **Upward when thinking (ask them a question)**

NLP -- AUDITORY PEOPLE

- **Like to hear words**
  - **Focus on sounds & voices**
- **Use words like:**
  - **That sounds like, I hear what you're saying …**
- **Eye movement is:**
  - **Down to the left, or**
  - **Side to side**

NLP -- FEELING PEOPLE

- **Want emotional & tactile input**
  - **Focus on “vibes” and “gut feelings”**
  - **Like hands-on demos**
  - **Remember events in terms of how they fel about what they saw/heard**
- **Use words like:**
  - **Give me a <u>feel</u> for, have a <u>handle</u> on …**
- **Eye movement is:**
  - **Down to the right**

NLP -- SUBTLETIES

- **Non-verbals; body language**
  - **Most important in one-to-one comms**
  - **Will be sensed as confidence, competence, honesty**
- **Match yourself to them**
  - **Formality level, body positioning, eye contact**
- **Match your intent: sincerity on the line**
- **Think before acting/talking**
  - **Engage brain before…**
  - **No bluffing, smoke or mirrors**

NLP -- YOUR ACTIONS

- **OBSERVE!!!**
  - **Watch staff members**
  - **Listen to their phraseology & language**
    - **FEELING: “can you give me a <u>feel</u> for?”**
    - **VISUAL: “can you <u>see</u> what I’m talking about?”**
    - **AUDITORY: “do you <u>hear</u> what I’m saying?”**
  - **Questions they ask highlight their <u>*needs*</u>**

- **IMPORTANT: observe *yourself,* too**

BRIEFING COMMS: OTHER/TECHNICAL

- **Organization & appearance of the brief**
- **Personal bearing**
- **Voice control**
- **Gestures**
- **Beware the pointer!**
- **Eye contact**
  - **Especially when making critical points**
  - **And when asking for decisions or affirmation**

BRIEFING COMMS: OTHER/TECH (cont)

- Subordinates usually cue off their seniors
- Have hard copies available at the outset, at least for critical attendees
- Detractors: hot or loaded questions
  - Don’t attack them!
  - Refer the question/issue to the group instead, or
  - Reflect the question back to the originator

BRIEFING COMMS: OTHER/TECH (cont)

- **Setting counts: arrive early to ensure lighting, temperature, audiovisual aids, seating …**
- **Use subtleties to advantage (only)**
- **If you want positive action from someone, be positive yourself**
  - **Avoid gender-specific language**
  - **Avoid stereotypes**
  - **Avoid profanity**
- **Don’t apologize for your brief.**

REMEMBER THIS -- IF NOTHING ELSE

- **Communication is 100% people**
- **Awareness (self & other) is critical**
- **Positive attitude/bearing affects credibility**
- **Find right time & place for each comm**
- **Honesty, integrity, accuracy & logic are key**
- **Listen**
- **Think before you talk**
- **And …**

THE ART OF COMMUNICATING